

Remarks

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's finding of allowable subject matter in dependent claims 9 and 31 and the courtesies extended by the Examiner in conducting the Office Interview of May 6, 2003 and the Telephone Interview of May 12, 2003. This Amendment was prepared in accordance with the agreements reached in the Interviews.

As discussed in the Interviews, Applicants have amended the independent claims in the application, i.e., claims 1, 10, and 26, to include the feature where the air outflow opening of the air-distributing device is on at least one of an upper narrow side and a lateral outer narrow side of the backrest. Thus, the air outflow opening can be included on the upper narrow side or lateral outer narrow side of the backrest, or in both locations. Applicants respectfully submit that the references of record do not disclose or suggest, either alone or in combination, an air-distributing device as claimed for reducing undesirable draughts for the vehicle seat occupant during use of the device in an open motor vehicle.

As agreed by the Examiner in the Interviews, Saito et al., at least, does not disclose at least the feature where the air outflow opening of the air-distributing device is on at least one of an upper narrow side and a lateral outer narrow side of the backrest. Applicants also respectfully submit that there would be no motivation to modify Saito et al. to include this feature into the "mechanism for supplying and exhausting an aroma or sweet smell" of Saito et al. (emphasis added). See Col. 2, lines 13-14. In Applicants' invention, the air outflow opening of the air-distributing device is located on at least one of an upper

narrow side and a lateral outer narrow side of the backrest in order to reduce undesirable draughts for a vehicle occupant when used in an open motor vehicle. There would be no motivation to include such an air outflow opening in the aroma generating mechanism of Saito et al.

Applicants have added new method claim 33 and new apparatus claims 34 and 35. New method claim 33 includes the feature of flowing air from an air-distributing device supported in a backrest of a vehicle seat assembly of an open motor vehicle from at least one of an upper narrow side and a lateral outer narrow side of the backrest. New apparatus claim 34 includes the allowable features of dependent claim 9 and claim 1, from which claim 9 depends. New apparatus claim 35 includes the allowable features of dependent claim 31 and claim 26, from which claim 31 depends. Applicants respectfully submit that new independent claims 33-35 are also allowable.

Further in this Amendment, Applicants have amended several of the claims for matters of form. Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's rejection of pending claims 1-3, 5, 9, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, have now been overcome. Applicants have cancelled claims 4 and 15 and, therefore, the Examiner's rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, has been obviated.

Applicants respectfully request re-entry of withdrawn claims 6-8, 16-25, 29, and 32 in the application, since these claims now depend from an allowable generic independent claim. Applicants have amended several of these claims for matters of form.

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